



## *Nursing Home Workforce Support and Expansion Act*

The *Nursing Home Workforce Support and Expansion Act* dedicates funding to address **long-term care workforce development**, a vital step to better protect vulnerable seniors and people with disabilities.

It's hard to imagine a more important time for federal action to support our direct-caregiving workforce. COVID-19 has shone a spotlight on the role of the direct caregiving workforce, which has heroically provided vital services and supports, often in very difficult situations and with little support. This direct-caregiving workforce is composed mostly of women of color who frequently don't earn a living wage<sup>1</sup> or receive health care benefits, paid leave, formal training, professional recognition, or opportunities for advancement. They're disproportionately losing jobs<sup>2</sup> as nursing homes grapple with the financial fallout from COVID-19.

The *Nursing Home Workforce Support and Expansion Act* provides direct appropriations for grants to states to support workers providing aide, nursing, and social work services in post-acute and long-term care (LTC) settings. The grants are provided to states and territories, based on their population of adults over 65 years of age and people with disabilities, and to tribes and tribal organizations through a consultation process.

The funds must be used to:

- provide wage subsidies to employees in post-acute and LTC positions
- provide student loan repayment or tuition assistance to eligible individuals
- guarantee affordable and accessible childcare for eligible individuals
- provide transportation assistance to eligible individuals

The funds may be used to:

- establish a reserve fund for emergency financial assistance
- provide in-kind resource donations, such as interview clothing and conference attendance fees
- provide assistance with activities designed to lower barriers to employment, including legal assistance
- support eligible employers in offering not less than two weeks of paid leave per year

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<sup>1</sup> LeadingAge. *Making Care Work Pay. How Paying at Least a Living Wage to Direct Care Workers Could Benefit Care Recipients, Workers, and Communities* <https://leadingage.org/making-care-work-pay>

<sup>2</sup> Corwin Rhyan and Ani Turner. *Health Sector Job Recovery Remains Slower among Women of Color*. June 2021. <https://altarum.org/publications/health-sector-job-recovery-remains-slower-among-women>